

# **Some EPA Perspectives: Wetlands/Section 404**

**Ninth Regional Wetlands and Water  
Resources Meeting**

**Kansas City, Missouri**

**April 2, 2002**

# The Challenge

- Increase the quantity and quality of the nation's wetlands
  - No overall net loss in the regulatory program
  - 100,000 acre annual net gain by 2005
- Prevent degradation of remaining wetlands from pollution, hydrological modification, invasive species, habitat fragmentation
- Restore the quality of wetlands
- Protect and restore streams and other open waters

# Our Wetlands Tool Box

- Regulatory
- Science
- State, Tribal & Local
- Wetlands Monitoring
- Outreach
- Restoration
- Planning
- Incentives
- Acquisition

# The 100,000 Acre Net Gain Formula

125,000 acres agricultural gain (WR)

plus

40,000 acres gain (other federal programs)

plus

35,000 acres in non-federal programs

minus

100,000 acres annual loss rate

equals

100,000 acres net gain

# EPA's Current Priorities

- Improving the success rate of compensatory mitigation
- Developing wetlands monitoring programs
- Increasing protection for vulnerable waters

# What does “priority” mean to EPA

- Is essential to meet our goals
- EPA’s role is important
- EPA’s attention can have a good payback
- Merits investment of resources

# Improving Success Rate of Compensatory Mitigation

- NAS and GAO Studies
- Setting priorities (e.g., landscape profiling, community visioning)
- Building institutional capacity
- More accountability
- Adaptive management
- Evaluation and feedback

# Wetlands Monitoring

- Developing a strategy
- Developing the methods
- Building monitoring programs
- Connecting to remediation programs



# Consolidated Assessment and Listing Methodology (CALM)



- ❖ Best practices guide for water quality monitoring and assessment
- ❖ Methodologies for assessing WQS attainment based on chemical, physical, biological and habitat data
- ❖ Monitoring design
- ❖ Appendix: Elements of comprehensive State monitoring and assessment programs
  - „ Monitoring strategies for monitoring ALL waterbodies
  - „ Annual work plans identifying when addressing unassessed waterbodies

# Addressing Vulnerable Waters

- Narrow regulatory gaps (e.g. SWANCC and Tulloch)
- Ensure correct jurisdictional calls
- Build support for protecting isolated waters
- Improve cumulative impact assessment
- Develop programs to protect and restore non-404 waters

# Broader Tools: Regulatory

- Policing the (b)(1) Guidelines
- Compliance/enforcement
- Interagency relations
  - Corps projects
- Mining
- Nationwides and other general permits
- 404/Swampbuster

# Broader Tools: State/Tribal/Local

- Section 404 assumption
- State Program General Permits
- Section 401 programs
- Smart Growth
- Core Elements
- Target funds to priorities

# Broader Tools: Science

- Landscape profiling
- Community visioning
- Bioassessment

# Broader Tools: Incentives/Acquisition

- Farm bill
- CARA
- Land trusts

# Broader Tools: Restoration

- Training
- Guidance
- Web Site
- Enforcement SEPs
- Research and Development
- Watershed Management/ NEP's
- Hypoxia Action PPlan
- North American Waterfowl Conservation Act
- State/Tribal Grants
- Five Star
- 404 mitigation

# Broader Tools: Outreach

- Re-energize American Wetlands Month
- Maintain/expand web sites
- Golf and the Environment
- Bird, amphibian and reptile conservation



# Are we following the right path?

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# Wetlands Monitoring

The How's:

- Workgroup
- BAWWG
- State/tribal projects
- Citizen Monitoring
- Integration with water quality program management

# Improving Success Rate of Compensatory Mitigation

- Regional/HQ Workgroup
- Mitigation Forum and follow-up
- State/tribal projects
- Circuit riders
- Corps RGL Follow-up

# Addressing Vulnerable Wetlands

The How's:

- **Regional/HQ Workgroup**
- **SWANCC guidance/rules**
- **Identification/delineation**
- **Watershed management framework for cumulative impacts**
- **Compliance/Enforcement**
- **State/Tribal projects**
- **Local programs**
- **Outreach**
- **Acquisition/incentives**